



China and other emerging actors in Africa

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Preface

China and other emerging actors are gaining political and economic ground in the world in general and in Africa in particular. They are already having an enormous effect on people's everyday life in the continent and influence on African societies and donor policies. Kepa commissioned this study on this hotly debated but still largely unexplored phenomenon in order to produce a concise analysis that gives an overview of China's relations with African countries, concrete examples of emerging actors' current involvements, and notions on civil society cooperation.

This fairly new phenomenon influences the working environment of African civil society organisations (CSOs) and their cooperation with their international partners. It is essential that Northern CSOs involved in development questions are prepared to examine how this new involvement could impact their activities. Should they, for example, create or strengthen links with their Chinese peers in order to get a comprehensive understanding of their activities and willingness for cooperation. Chinese civil society is not as limited as is commonly thought. Andrew Wells-Dang (2012) offers an eye-opening analysis of multiple Chinese social networks which are forming informal cross-sectoral linkages even for advocacy.

Northern CSOs could in many ways support their Southern partners in relation to emerging actors' increased involvement in Africa. One of them is to acknowledge and prevent that these actors are used as an excuse by the World Bank and other international institutions to allow for lower human rights, ecological or other achieved standards around the world. Another dilemma is the lack of publicity on cooperation plans. One example of this is Pro-Savana in which Brazilians and Japanese receive around 6000 million hectares of land to cultivate in central Mozambique. Kepa's partner organisation Justiça Ambiental obtained information on the project from local farmers but was not able to influence the plan as the agreement had already been signed, and it is now concerned about the project's impact on local farmers' livelihood.

However, maybe the main challenge is to try to see the forest for the trees and to scrutinise appropriately the possibilities and challenges that these involvements may mean for African societies. This effort is crucial to be based on African perceptions and research instead of Western ones as the policy perspectives and the interests differ. Despite the drawbacks of China's presence, it is often seen in Africa far more positive than anything resulting from Europe's long involvement, due mainly to the more level playing field that in general exists between China and its African partners, and stronger agreements on beneficiation. On the other hand China's involvement, particularly in extractive industries, is not regarded as sustainable in the long run.

A recent contribution to this discussion is the research of the Southern Africa Resource Watch (Shelton & Kabemba 2012) on China, southern Africa and extractive industries based on local-level studies in ten countries. It argues that there can be a 'win-win partnership' if southern African governments' policies are based on achieving long-term socio-economic and development goals. It concludes that Chinese investment is neither an unqualified boon nor is it a bane and that governing elites tend to overstate the benefits, while the critical voices either understate or deny them entirely. The crucial thing is that the African governments should search for tools to turn the impact towards positive outcomes, which in the context of extractive industries could include an effective mining public administration, competencies to run extractive industries, appropriate tax regimes, functional linkages between the extractive industries and local economies and social responsibility demands for Chinese companies.

We hope that this study provides a concise but comprehensive overview of this complex phenomenon so crucial to Africa's future.

In Helsinki on 23 October 2012

OUTI HAKKARAINEN
KEPA

List of abbreviations

CDB	China Development Bank
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSO	civil society organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECC	Economic and Commercial Counselor
Eximbank	Export-import bank
FDI	foreign direct investment
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
IFI	international financial institution
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOFCOM	Ministry of Commerce
ODA	official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PRC	People's Republic of China
SASAC	State-owned assets Supervision and Administration Commission
SOE	state-owned enterprise
TAZARA	Tanzania-Zambia Railway
UNCHR	United Nations Commission on Human Rights

Introduction

One of the controversial topics in the current international development debate is the rise of new emerging partners for African countries in general and for Sub Saharan countries in particular, and this novel degree of South-South cooperation. These emerging actors, especially China but increasingly also India and Brazil, have spread their economic but also political networks from urban centres to remote rural areas in Africa. This development has been met with confusion by many as there is not much comprehensive information on the complex situation and its long-term implications on the continent. Furthermore, in many cases it seems that African governments are giving away their natural resources and letting their people pay the cost.

The rise of the emerging actors' has been unprecedented. Trade between Africa and the emerging actors has more than quadrupled from 2000 to 2009 (AEO 2011) and a similar growth surge has been seen in investments and aid as

well. However, the emerging actors' share of Africa's foreign trade is still rather limited, around 20 %. That these actors have caused such a stir is mostly due to the rapid rise of their engagement and the prediction that the rise is going to continue.

The similarities among China, India and Brazil in their engagements with Africa are abundant. They all wish to increase their diplomatic support, diversify their resource base and obtain new markets on the continent. In addition, they all have experienced varying degrees of colonization or imperialism, and thus identify themselves as equal partners for African countries instead of being donors. They are also developing or middle-income countries. Due to these similarities the emerging actors have been widely seen as competitive actors with conflicting interests in Africa (Shaw 2010). However, there is still little concrete evidence of this, but the imitation of each other's foreign policies in Africa may cause conflicting interests among these actors.

There are, of course, also differences between their African policies. India's policies are not as state-centred as those of China, and its main drivers in Africa are private actors. India's official cooperation is also much more likely to act with African regional organizations (such as COMESA and ECOWAS) while China is highly dependent on its bilateral ties (Naidu 2010). India's democratic tradition and sizeable diaspora in Africa have not

1 Emerging actors are all actors that are not seen as "traditional actors" in Africa, and they include countries such as Turkey, South-Korea, Singapore and Russia. In this report, we will focus mainly on China but to some extent also on India and Brazil. The term "emerging actors" will henceforth refer especially to these three countries.

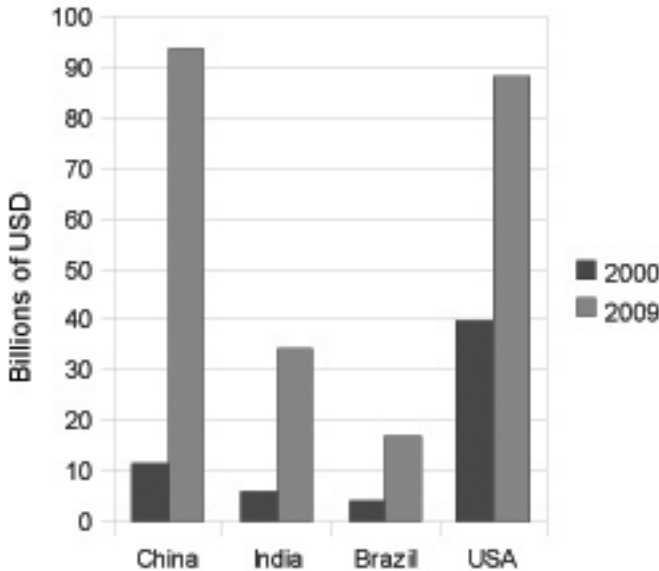


Figure 1. Chart on growing engagement of China, India and Brazil (African Economic Outlook 2011)

yet played a major role in Asia-Africa dynamics, but they must not be undervalued in the future (Cheru & Obi 2010, 4).

Brazil, as the “smallest” of the emerging actors, does not yet have a continental span in Africa but concentrates on specific areas. Brazil’s activities are focused on the Lusophone countries (Angola, Mozambique, and the minuscule Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Sao Tomé and Príncipe) as well as South Africa (Barbosa, Narciso & Bincalana 2009). Brazil’s domestic resource base is slightly different from that of China or India, and although it is interested in African resources, its main sector of activity is agriculture (Bilal & Rampa 2011).

This working paper provides an overview on these issues, with particular focus on Chinese involvement in Africa but partly also that of India and Brazil. It shows that Chinese cooperation with Africa has long historical roots, although it has extended especially during the last decades, and that it includes economic cooperation, cultural diplomacy as well as aid. China’s interests are equally multifarious, from natural resources to diplomatic support and gaining new economic opportunities. This working paper gives several examples to concretize the impact of China and other emerging actors in Africa. It also confirms that this impact is often negative and that these actors give questionable support for undemocratic governments. However, it also argues that western donors are often to be equally blamed and that African people could largely benefit from this cooperation if their governments and active civil society actors were able to construct coherent policies towards this ever widening phenomenon. Therefore, Northern civil society actors should also challenge themselves to find out how they can support their African partners in this issue.

From ideology to pragmatism

In order to understand China’s contemporary involvement with Africa and its role as a new actor on the continent, it is important to have an understanding of the broad history of Sino-African relations. In fact, China is not as such a *new* actor in Africa. Its activities on the African continent began in the 15th century when Chinese admiral Zheng Ho sailed to East Africa (Taylor 2006, 16). These long-lasting symbolic ties and the fact that China has never been a colonial power in Africa are often highlighted in official Chinese rhetoric. However, Sino-African relations were very limited in scope before the 1950s.

After the Communist revolution, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) was firmly engaged with the Korean War, and African affairs were not in the centre of Beijing’s interests. However, this started to change in 1955 with the famous Asian-African conference held in Bandung, when China, along with other developing nations, established itself as a part of the non-aligned movement. In Bandung, China expanded its “Five Principles of Mutual Coexistence” (originally agreed upon with India) to guide much of its foreign policy:

1. mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity,
2. mutual non-aggression,
3. non-interference in each other’s internal affairs,
4. equality and mutual benefit, and
5. peaceful coexistence. (Brautigam 2009, 29–30.)

These principles can be seen as the basis for current Chinese foreign policy.

From the beginning of the 1960s, China took an active interest in Africa. This was the result of the PRC’s efforts to further its “One-China” policy aiming at the exclusion of Taiwan from international fora, as well as China’s growing tensions with the Soviet Union; China was trying to gain political leverage in Africa. China established official relations with numerous African countries and provided official aid to countries such as Guinea, Ghana and Tanzania. (Taylor 2006, 20–24.) Although the Cultural Revolution resulted in

a short freeze in Sino-African relations, Chinese activities were abundant in Africa until the mid-1970s. Chinese actions were mainly centrally planned aid projects with political rather than economic motivations, such as the Tanzania-Zambia Railway.

The death of Mao in 1976 and the policy changes ushered by Deng Xiaoping in 1978 marked the beginning of a new era for China. Mao's radical and inward communism gave way to a more pragmatic approach, a gradual opening and modernization of the Chinese economy. This shift was reflected in China's Africa policy. China's foreign policy was harnessed to these modernization efforts, and its focus shifted towards the United States and the Soviet Union. However, although Sino-African cooperation decreased relatively, the Chinese never left Africa. During the 1980s, China focused on small-scale development projects (Taylor 2006, 59–61), but, more importantly, the PRC experimented with combining aid with investment and fostering

economic win-win cooperation with Africa. This took the form of export credits, state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and joint ventures with local entrepreneurs. These new forms of engagement are clearly visible in current Chinese actions in Africa. From the 1990s, China has developed a highly pragmatic and active Africa policy, which culminated in the new millennium and the FOCAC (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation) summit of 2006. (Brautigam 2009, 56-65.)

In sum, Chinese cooperation with Africa has traversed from politically oriented high-profile projects to a changing mix of economic and political interests met through official and private agents. Contemporary Chinese policies towards Africa can be seen as a reaction to the globalization of the Chinese economy, but it is crucial to understand the historical trajectories of Sino-African relations, since this varied history can be seen in Chinese rhetoric and practices (Strauss 2009).

China's big gift: the Tanzania-Zambia railway

The Tanzania-Zambia Railway (TAZARA) is the most high-profile and momentous Chinese aid venture in Africa to date. The Tanzanian and Zambian governments originally tried to obtain funding for the project from western donors, who turned the project down. The Chinese government offered to fund the project through an interest-free loan, and the deal was made in 1965. The construction started in 1967 and lasted for over a decade with thousands of Chinese, Tanzanians and Zambians working on the project. (Monson 2008, 197-220.)

This was a showcase project for China in Africa. It satisfied Chinese objectives of anti-hegemony and balancing the Soviet pressure in Africa (Taylor 2006, 39). But more importantly, it highlighted the perceived uniqueness of the Chinese development model compared to the western model. The project was doomed by western donors, and the Chinese worked side-by-side with African workers and shared their living standards, unlike Westerners. Although the realities of the construction work did not live up to the rhetoric surrounding them, the TAZARA project was crucial in advocating an egalitarian China as an amicable force on the continent. The TAZARA project is even today used as an example of the long-lasting mutual friendship between China and Africa. (Strauss 2009.)

The multiplicity of Chinese actors

Before addressing the contemporary developments of Sino-African relations, it is important to stress the diverse actors concerned with relations between China and Africa. China’s foreign policy is too often viewed as uniform due to the authoritarian role of its government.

Chinese foreign policy is in principle governed by the Central government, which has an oversight role over all operations (aid, trade and investment) in Africa (Brautigam 2009, 107). However, the actual endeavours in Africa are governed by several governmental entities, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), Ministry of Finance (MOF), the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC), the Export-import bank (Eximbank) and the China Development Bank (CDB) (Brautigam 2009, 108; Gill & Reilly 2007, 45). These agencies form the structure of official Chinese activities in Africa, and they are complemented by subordinate agencies

such as embassies and Economic and Commercial Counselors (ECCs).

Although the different agencies cooperate with much Chinese aid and investments with Africa, there are also clear conflicts present in relations between them (Gill & Reilly 2007). The interests of the agencies are divergent. While the MOFCOM is focused on furthering China’s economic interests, the MOFA has a focus on reinforcing the image of China’s “peaceful development” through diplomatic efforts (Brautigam 2009, 111). These conflicts of interest and jurisdiction have been more visible in recent years, and they place subordinate agencies under contradictory demands (Gill & Reilly 2007). The confusion is often exacerbated by the chronic deficit of staff in departments such as the department of foreign aid.

While there are multiple government bodies affecting the implementation of China’s Africa policies, there is a plethora of other Chinese actors on the continent. The most visible players in international headlines are the large Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs), which operate in Africa. SOEs are owned by the state and governed by SASAC. They are driven by political motivations, but they simultaneously follow economic imperatives. This mixture of interests unravels

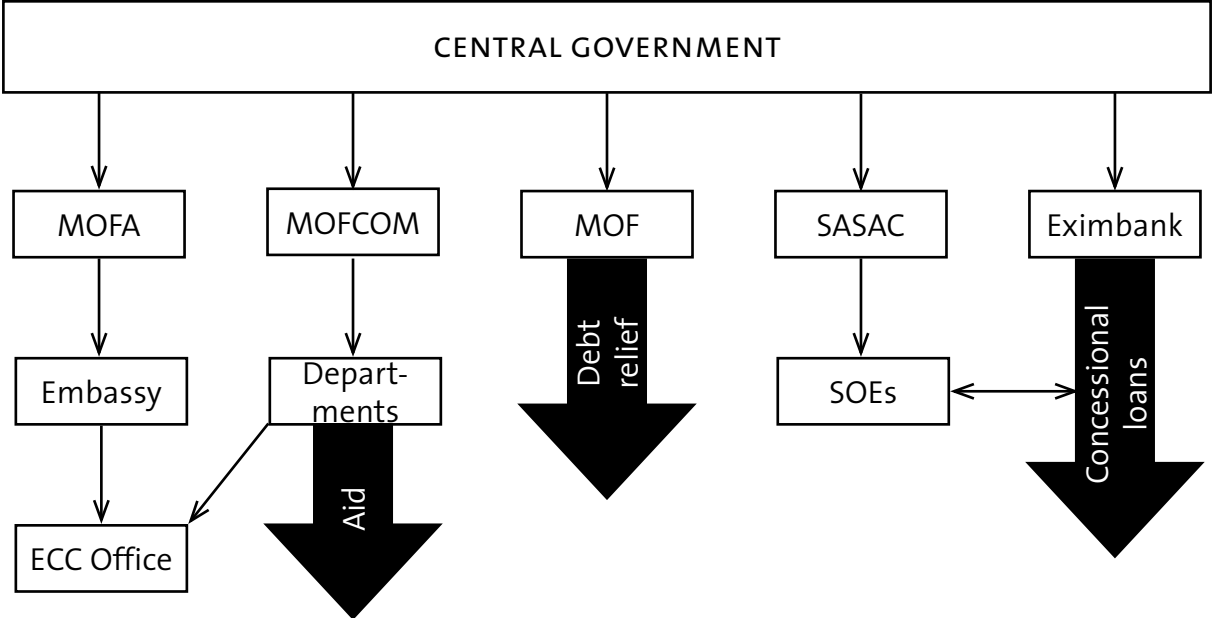


Figure 2. Agencies in China’s Africa Policy. Revised from Gill & Reilly (2007) and Brautigam (2009).

differently depending on the context. (Alden 2007, 37-47.) But perhaps even more visible for Africans are the growing number of small Chinese-run businesses widespread across many parts of the continent, manufacturers and traders of everyday consumer goods. All in all, this can be seen as a part of a growing Chinese diaspora with around 300 000 Chinese in South Africa, 20 000 in Tanzania and close to 100 000 in Nigeria (Alden 2007, 52). It is clear that these small-scale traders operate on a totally different level than the large Chinese corporations and are not constrained by official Chinese policy objectives in their day-to-day life.

As there are many Chinese actors involved, the impact of China's activities cannot be evaluated as a whole – whenever Chinese actions are addressed, the question “which actors are involved” must be asked.

A mix of politics and economy: Chinese interests in Africa

China's growing interest in the African continent is too often depicted as a simple quest for resources. Although China is driven by its growing demand for resources, it also tries to gain diplomatic support and to obtain new economic opportunities in Africa.

China's Africa policy is partly driven by its bid for diplomatic support from African countries (van Dijk 2009, 15). China wishes to increase its influence in international institutions, and obtaining diplomatic allies among the 54 African states is a major part of this objective. A recent example of this influence in international institutions is China's ultimately successful campaign to replace the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), which was somewhat critical towards the Beijing administration, with the UN Human Rights Council, in which China's influence is more substantial. The support from African states played a major role in the campaign (Eisenman 2007, 35-36).

China also uses its African foreign policy as a platform for showcasing its policy of “peaceful development”. The notable rise of China in world politics has raised some concern among other countries, and China has tried to stress that “peaceful development” (*heping fazhan*) is a cornerstone of its foreign policy and that China strives for a peaceful and equal international order. However, a firm notion of anti-hegemony (directed implicitly against US global dominance) as a goal of Chinese foreign policy is also visible in its quest for diplomatic support (Taylor 2009, 4-5, 16.). This pans out as an interesting desire for a gradual change in the international order led by the United States, and China is seeking diplomatic support for these aspirations.

Finally, China wants diplomatic support for its “one-China policy” in its battle against Taiwan. Africa has been a key battleground for Taipei and Beijing in what has come to be known as “checkbook diplomacy”, and the PRC has been increasingly victorious in this quest for official recognition. (Taylor 2009, 27-29.) At the moment only four African countries maintain official re-

lations with Taiwan: Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, and Swaziland (most recent situation from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan). However, this is still a key diplomatic objective of Beijing, and in fact the only prerequisite for the PRC to recognize a state (Eisenman 2007, 37).

It is clear that, although this is not the only reason for China's presence in Africa, China is extremely interested in African resources. In 2005, oil was the largest and most discussed of these resources, as around 70 % of China's imports from Africa consisted of mineral fuels (Taylor 2009, 38), but Chinese imports in other natural resources such as copper, platinum, steel and timber were also noteworthy. The Chinese economy has been growing at a fast pace over recent decades, and country's demand for energy and materials for its industries has outgrown its domestic supply quickly. Even though China was a net exporter of oil until the early 1990s, it imported almost half of its oil consumption already in 2005 (Eisenman 2007, 38).

China's approach to energy and other natural resources is highly strategic. It particularly wants to balance the possible effects of market shocks and price volatility and to diversify its energy supply. This desire of at least partly bypassing the markets has a considerable impact on Chinese resource investments in Africa since they are heavily dependent on the bilateral relations of China with resource-rich countries. (Eisenman 2007.) For this reason, it can be foreseen that Chinese priorities in Africa are centred around Angola, Sudan, Congo (DRC) and Nigeria also in the future.

Obtaining new economic opportunities can be seen as a double objective for China. On the one hand, Chinese companies are able to find new markets for their products, but on the other it is clearly hoped that some production processes could be outsourced to Africa. Chinese companies view Africa as a promising market area, where competition is not as fierce as in the homeland. So far, Chinese exports to African markets have greatly exceeded investments coming into Africa, but the Chinese government has shown a serious commitment to establishing production in Africa by building industrial parks across the continent. (Gu 2011.) These activities are likely to increase in the future.

Modes of cooperation

In order to meet these set objectives, China has adopted a wide array of approaches in its cooperation with African countries. These can be divided into four categories: economic cooperation, cultural diplomacy, summit diplomacy and aid. Although presented here as separate, in reality these different modes of cooperation are closely linked. Together they form the unique mix of Sino-African policies.

Economic cooperation can be divided into Sino-African trade and Chinese foreign direct investments (FDI) to Africa. The exact statistics on trade or FDI vary extensively (trade statistics for 2006 are evaluated between US\$ 32 billion and US\$ 55 billion depending on the source). However, it is sufficient to state that Sino-African economic activities have increased dramatically in the past decade and, although not yet greater than those of traditional donors, have a considerable impact on the continent and especially on specific countries and sectors (van Dijk 2009, 14–19; Alden, Large & de Oliveira 2008, 11–17).

Both trade and investment are understandably focused on exporting resources from Africa and importing Chinese manufactures, but the Chinese government puts considerable efforts into altering this structure. Many investments are also made in infrastructure (such as telecommunications), and Chinese companies are getting a considerable foothold in the construction sector of Africa (Alden, Large & de Oliveira 2008, 16). This is also a fine example of the intertwined nature of different modes of cooperation. China's investments in Africa are widely supported by the country's aid projects and different loan agreements and government incentives.

Second, China has started an increasingly noticeable project of cultural diplomacy. The central government has noticed the anxiety that faces China's growing role in Africa and elsewhere in the world, and has tried to build a positive image of China's foreign role. This is done through different types of events and actions that foster mutual learning and education. China has established prominent programmes of human resource training and academic exchange programs with Africa. The most famous programme is of course the establishing of Confucius Institutes in universities across Africa. (Haifang 2010.)

Third, China has engaged in active “summit diplomacy”. Chinese leaders are active in their official visits to Africa and African leaders often frequent Beijing, but the most high-profile manifestation of this “summit diplomacy” is without a doubt the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) (Taylor 2009, 16). The first FOCAC meeting was held in 2000, and they have been held in 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2012. These are prestigious summits with the political elite of participating countries present, and they serve as an important stage for public diplomacy. Actually barely any political decisions are made in FOCAC meetings, since all decisions are made bilaterally beforehand and only announced during FOCAC meetings (He 2008).

This does not mean that summit diplomacy is of limited meaning. The FOCAC meetings are integral for showcasing the friendly Sino-African relations and signalling the global public of the vast commonalities between Africans and the Chinese. Mutual respect between the parties is often highlighted. This should not be devalued, since various African leaders have stated that the high profile of bi- and multilateral meeting with the Chinese government sends out a clear message of the serious intent of the Chinese and the mutual interests in play.

What is Chinese aid?

Chinese aid has stirred up remarkable discussions and also misconceptions. Relatively little is known about it because of China’s secrecy concerning its aid spending. This section will present briefly the general features of Chinese aid and compare them to those of western donors.

Although China has been giving aid to Africa since the 1960s, China has not yet produced an explicit definition of what it sees as aid (Davies 2008, 2; China’s Information Office of the State Council 2011). However, Chinese aid can be seen as threefold: grant aid, concessional loans (including interest-free loans) and debt relief. The mixture of these different means of aid deliverance varies, but roughly it seems that loans take up a bit over 50 % of China’s aid with grants and debt reliefs covering the remaining part (Brautigam 2009, 170). The actors involved in Chinese aid were depicted in Figure 2. Chinese companies (state-owned or private) play a particularly notable role in delivering Chinese aid, since most of Chinese aid is transferred in kind, and not in capital.

Chinese aid projects are usually implemented as turnkey projects. This is often the case with loans as well as grants, since many of Chinese loan agreements are “resource-backed loans”, in which China provides some project and the loan is repaid in resources or products. This form of aid is often criticized, but many African governments prefer this approach for its timeliness in delivering projects. Furthermore, African states do have a say on the implementer of the projects. Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, for instance, have both insisted that a fixed percentage of work in Chinese projects must be done by local contractors. (Brautigam 2009, 144-153.)

Another distinctive feature of Chinese aid is the insistence on non-conditionality. This is a major part of Chinese foreign policy and a way to distinguish Chinese interests from western, or “neo-imperial” interests. In theory, Chinese aid is operated through a “request-based system”: African countries make suggestions to the Chinese embassies, and the Chinese either approve or deny these suggestions (more often than not, they approve). This often leads to projects in which poverty reduction is not in the core, such as stadiums and government palaces, but at the

same time it opens the possibility of more innovative and demand-driven projects (Brautigam 2009).

China does not like to identify itself as a donor. The Chinese government emphasizes that it is a partner for African countries and that its engagement with African nations is based on mutual cooperation, not traditional donor-recipient relations (Brautigam 2009, 135). Behind the rhetoric, there is some truth to this statement since Chinese aid is almost always to with other forms of investment in cooperation packages. This feeds misunderstandings of Chinese aid processes. In addition, China does not adhere to the official development assistance (ODA) criteria drafted by the development assistance committee (DAC) of the OECD, which makes Chinese official aid hard to study.

This has led to huge variations between estimates of the amount of Chinese aid. China has only recently started publishing statistical data on its aid allocations, but it has been neither systematic nor reliable. Officially aid is presented mainly during intergovernmental summits in the form of engagements. This reluctance to publish the data is due to domestic and foreign pressures on the Beijing government (Chaponnière 2009, 63). The World Bank has estimated that Chinese aid globally has risen from 0,5 billion US dollars in 1999 to 1,9 billion US dollars in 2009 (World Bank 2011), while Brautigam (2011a) estimates Chinese aid disbursements to Africa to have reached 1.2 billion US dollars in 2008. The exact amounts are under dispute, but this is still quite moderate compared with traditional donors. However, the growth in Chinese aid has been phenomenal. Aid figures also underestimate the Chinese impact on the continent considerably, since aid is only a small part of China's engagement with Africa. Chinese trade and investment estimates surpass Chinese aid by far (Alden, Large & de Oliveira 2008).²

Although Chinese aid is dispersed throughout Africa due to its integral role in Chinese bilateral relations, there are clear imbalances between countries in the amount received. Sudan, Nigeria, Angola and Botswana receive the most aid in sub-Saharan Africa (Chaponnière 2009, 67). This, too, suggests a firm tie between aid and other forms of cooperation. However, other countries also receive substantial amounts of Chinese aid,

and the list of the biggest receivers also reflects the size of the countries' economy. Sectorally, Chinese aid focuses on "agricultural development, infrastructure, human resources training, and medical and health cooperation" (Alden, Large & de Oliveira 2008, 17). Infrastructure is clearly the sector in which Chinese aid is the most prominent and in which China has a "competitive advantage".

China's approach in Africa has been described as the "Beijing Consensus" (Taylor 2009, 23), although the Beijing government itself does not use this concept. This means a policy of mutual respect, non-interference and heterodoxy of models of development. The Beijing Consensus can be seen as a counterforce to the "Washington Consensus" promoted by prominent western states and the international financial institutions (IFIs). The Beijing Consensus is in no way a radical renegotiation of the global economic order, but it does offer African nations possibilities for "triangulating donors" and gaining some room for their own policymaking (Tan-Mullins, Mohan & Power 2010). In fact, the notion of a singular Chinese model for development is highly suspect. The Chinese may provide African partners with gateways for alternative development routes and distance from the conditionalities of IFIs, but this is not a coherent, all-encompassing Beijing policy. Moreover, as the Chinese development aid industry is notoriously understaffed, their very capability to implement such a policy is highly questionable.

It is important to address the positions of traditional donors and emerging actors (mainly China) in international development summits. In the Monterrey Process and Paris Declaration emerging actors were treated predominantly as recipients of development assistance, and as late as the Accra Agenda for Action in 2008, the distinct role of the emerging actors was addressed only briefly (Morazán et al. 2012). In fact, the traditional donors led by the OECD/DAC were relatively inactive in addressing the growing role of the emerging actors in development cooperation until the High Level Forum held in Busan in 2011. In addition, Chinese officials have traditionally been reluctant to coordinate with other donors, and China has been particularly wary of the World Bank.

In Busan, the emerging actors took a more proactive role in the international agreements of development aid. China and India signed the Busan declaration, but it is ultimately voluntary

² In addition, it can be argued that the impact of Chinese aid is considerably larger than its monetary value, since its "value-for-money" is better when compared with western aid.

and the criteria for emerging donors are different from those imposed on the traditional ones (Tran 2011). This could reflect a discomfort concerning the policy processes led by the OECD/DAC, and while suggesting an atmosphere of cooperation, the emerging actors clearly wish to be more thoroughly considered as major players within development assistance. In Busan it became clear that Chinese officials want to cooperate with traditional donors strictly on their own terms. The result of the Busan summit, the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, is a relatively open-ended policy document, which

leaves much to be agreed upon implementation (Morazán et al. 2012).

The Busan summit made two things in particular clearly visible. On the one hand, it raised the need for a new, or at least complementary, forum for discussions that would not be under the OECD/DAC system (Morazán et al 2012). On the other, China's actions can be interpreted as a step towards further cooperation with traditional donors, at least when compared to its traditional skepticism concerning western and World Bank led aid processes. Indeed, such cooperation would be highly beneficial for Africa, since the emerg-

The main Chinese policy documents relevant for Africa

Although the official Chinese engagements with Africa are still largely shrouded in secrecy, Beijing has recently made efforts in partially exposing its foreign policy in Africa. One of the main mediums for this have been three official government white papers issued by China: White Paper on China's Africa Policy published in 2006, White Paper on China-Africa Economic and Trade Cooperation published in 2010 and White Paper on China's Foreign Aid published in 2011. These policy documents, although still very general in nature, to some extent clarify China's guiding principles for its activities in Africa and address crucial issues of those activities.

The White Paper on China's Africa Policy (2006) is a broad description of official Chinese actions in Africa. The paper does not offer new insights into China's Africa policy or provide novel justifications for those policies. However, the paper was published in early 2006, which is nearly a year before the 2006 FOCAC summit and before the heightened focus on China-Africa cooperation, and as such, the White Paper (2006) is primarily a statement of the central government's growing focus on Africa. The White Paper on China-Africa Economic and Trade Cooperation (2010) is also best seen regarding its international context. The paper is a summary of recent Chinese trade and investment with African counterparts, and more than anything else it engages in clarifying the recent Chinese activities on the continent. As such, it can be seen in part as a response to the wide range of commentaries and criticism directed at Chinese economic activities in Africa.

The most recent of the documents, the White Paper on China's Foreign Aid (2011), takes a step further in clarifying China's aid practices. Although still broad in nature, the document makes public many statistics that have before been up for speculation. The White Paper (2011) states the sectoral distribution of Chinese aid (61% of concessional loans are focused on economic infrastructure) and the regional distribution of aid (45,7% of aid directed to Africa and 32,8% to Asia; 39,7% directed to the Least-Developed countries). Having this said, the document does not provide a clear-cut definition of Chinese foreign aid or country-specific statistics of aid distribution.

All the White Papers highlight China's role as a developing country, which can be seen as implicitly indicating China's domestic pressures on foreign aid and engagements. Other recurring themes in the documents are the well-known mutual cooperation and win-win policies, the insistence on no political conditions for foreign policy (although the One-China policy is mentioned) and the focus on mutual respect. All in all, although clarifying many respects of China's foreign policy in Africa, the documents portray a China that is not dogmatic in its foreign policy, and more generally, the aforementioned policy documents can be seen as a gradual opening of Chinese foreign policy making and a partial response to international pressure.

ing actors could obviously learn much from the traditional donors' successes and failures in aid management (Alden & Sidiropoulos 2012).

In conclusion, Chinese actors in Africa pursue their economic but also other interests through a "win-win" mixture of aid, trade and investment and state diplomacy, or "soft power". China's cooperation with Africa is still limited compared to cooperation between Africa and western donors, but China is particularly significant because of the rapid growth of its engagements and its different approach to cooperation.

Manufacturing and employment

Some insight into the dynamics of manufacturing of emerging actors is given here by presenting how the manufacturing of textiles has been affected by the growing presence of China in Africa, with especial focus on local employment. This issue is crucial in addressing the developmental possibilities and threats posed by these new actors on Africa. In a continent where formal employment is already scarce and labour intensive manufacturing is often viewed as the way forward, the impact is bound to be significant.

Textile manufacturing is a sector in which the Chinese have been heavily criticized and blamed for repeating colonial practices, which ultimately lead to deindustrialization. Indeed, Chinese textile imports are flooding the continent and putting the local industries under extreme competition³. This has been documented in both the production of African batik clothes for local sale in West Africa and the more limited export oriented textile production of Southern Africa, and the Chinese have been blamed for substantial unemployment in the sectors. However, it has also been argued that the impact of Chinese imports has been overestimated, and the decline in African textile production can largely be accounted for by the developments of export-agreements with the EU and the USA, as well as inherent inefficiencies in the industries. Yet, it has been said that the Chinese imports are providing African markets with cheap goods and as such they are cutting the daily expenses of African families. (Taylor 2009, 63-86.)

Another way China can contribute to (or hinder) Africa's level of formal employment is through its investments to the African textile-manufacturing sector. An often-expressed desire is that the Chinese would move their industrial production (such as textiles) to African countries as this would provide employment directly through jobs and indirectly by being a catalyst for local production. However, Chinese invest-

³ It has been emphasized that this is not in line with official Chinese objectives in Africa, and this might be an opportunity for local actors to work together with Chinese officials to minimize the negative effects of Chinese imports on African manufacturing (Taylor 2009, 64).

ments into African manufacturing have so far been relatively scarce, but positive signs can be seen around the continent. (Brautigam 2009, 189-231.)

The African Labour Research Network (ALRN) has studied the effects of Chinese investments in ten African countries, focusing chiefly on working conditions and labour relations (yaw Baah & Jauch 2009). According to the study, workers' rights are frequently violated in Chinese companies. Some of their actions are in flagrant contravention of local legislation: in Namibia, for instance, construction workers in Chinese companies earn less than half of the minimum wage. In some of the countries studied, protective equipment may not be given and unionization may be prevented. In some cases, the jobs with the highest salaries were reserved for workers who were imported from China. Female workers had to suffer sexual harassment, and pregnancy was used as grounds for dismissal. (See also SASK 2009a, b.)

The results of this report have been corroborated by studies on working conditions in two Chinese-owned factories in Tanzania and Zambia (Brooks 2010; Lee 2009). Workers in these countries have experienced wide disappointment in Chinese labour conditions, and the main grievance of the textile-workers has been the casualization of labour in the Chinese-owned factories⁴. The Chinese factories have introduced contract labour schemes, and the working conditions are perceived as substantially weaker than previously when the factories were state-owned (this is true for both Tanzania and Zambia). Strikes have been organized in both researched contexts, but textile factories are often hard to impact through strikes as the factories can easily be moved to a more hospitable context. (Brooks 2010; Lee 2009.)

Labour casualization is naturally not a uniquely Chinese phenomenon, and other commercial actors present in Africa also employ contracted labourers. It is in fact unclear if there is anything distinctively unique in Chinese factory practices in Africa or if they are rather materializations of global economic strains.

China-Tanzania Friendship Textile Factory

The China-Tanzania Friendship Textile Factory is one with a background typical among Chinese textile investments in Africa. This Dar es Salaam based factory has a history that spans to the 1960s, when it was first established as a Chinese aid project. The factory was nevertheless struggling for decades, and it was established as a joint venture between a Chinese (51%) and a Tanzanian company (49%) in 1997 in order to rehabilitate production. Now the factory is a major producer of Tanzanian kanga-cloth and other textile products. The company is a major employer with a staff of 24 Chinese (in executive jobs) and 1000-1600 Tanzanians.

The problems faced by the factory have, however, been prevalent and in fact, the company requires substantial subsidies from the Chinese government to survive financially. The problems vary from infrastructural problems such as electricity cuts and inconsistent water supply to excessive competition from Asian made products. But the biggest disagreements concern labour relations, mainly wages and working hours. This is emblematic of most contemporary, global industries: there is a contradiction between the provision of decent wages and working conditions and producing cheap and competitive goods. (Brautigam 2009, 197-201.)

⁴ *Casualization of labour refers to the introduction of part-time and short-term labour contracts.*

Natural resources and human rights

The emerging actors' quest for resources has been one of the primary motivations for countries' engagement in Africa. As we have seen, this "oil diplomacy" has also been a major focus of critique. We will now address the human rights issues entangled in the resource trade from Africa.

Although Brazil is interested in African resources, it is a minuscule player in the sector compared to India and China. China's resource trade with Africa is by far larger than India's, but India is actively trying to obtain more resource deals (mainly in oil) from Africa (Obi 2010). China's oil purchases from Africa have gained widespread attention, while India has been operating without much frenzy.

Chinese oil diplomacy has been criticized mainly for its impact on human rights in Africa. Human rights organizations and government officials from western and African countries have repeatedly questioned the support given to authoritarian governments in exchange for oil and other resources, and the detrimental effect this has on human rights and governance (Taylor 2009, 89). This is critical since China and to some extent also India do much of their resource trade with Angola, Sudan, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, countries that are known for their oppressive governments and authoritarian rule. China's operations are also generally state-to-state activities, which give more power and resources directly to totalitarian states.

Furthermore, Chinese companies have repeatedly been accused of human rights violations against their African labour force (see e.g. Human Rights Watch 2012). This is certainly not a uniquely Chinese phenomena and western companies have been also been proven to impose inhuman working conditions in their international operations. This should not, however, invalidate the criticism of the Chinese companies involved. Additionally, it seems that in many instances working conditions have been worse in Chinese companies than in comparable instances.

The official Chinese government stance on human rights emphasizes economic rights over political rights and respect for the sovereignty of states through non-interference (Taylor 2009, 96-

97). The Chinese position on human rights clearly gives preference to economic development and stability over the various political rights promoted by most western human rights advocates (Taylor 2008). A communitarian perspective on rights and an emphasis on the rights of states complement the Chinese position. In their view, all states have the right to determine their own mode of existence.

This standpoint can be seen as an indirect criticism of the western 'human rights discourse', which highlights individual rights and political freedom in order to obtain economic and political benefits for western power blocs. This is to a certain extent understandable, but the view undermines the clear economic benefits that are enshrined with the Chinese politics of non-interference in questions of individual rights. In addition, Beijing's model of human rights relies on the assumption of a strong and stable developmental state, which is not always the case in Africa. Numerous African governments can still be identified as neopatrimonial regimes focused on rent-seeking and tight control of all resources.⁵ In such instances the Chinese principles do not lead to development, which can be seen in countries such as Zimbabwe. (Taylor 2008.)

However, China's position on human rights is changing. China received enormous critique of its engagement with Sudan during the height of the Darfur crisis, and it did change its position of non-interference on the matter. A similar shift in stance can be seen more generally in China's position with workers' and environmental rights. (Brautigam 2009, 281-284.) This implies that Chinese actors, at least partly, react to public opinion and are responsive to advocacy work in critical issues.

⁵ *Neopatrimonial bureaucracies tend to focus on channeling resources and funds directly to leading bureaucrats and politicians. In such a system, governmental positions are often used for gathering benefits for elite circles.*

Is more work good work? The case of Zambia

A particularly heated example of Chinese resource extraction is Zambia and its copper production. Zambia has been a key priority in China's Africa policy for decades and Sino-Zambian relations have been described as an "all-weather" friendship (Mutesa 2010). Contemporary relations are based largely on the trade of Zambian copper, which has caused unprecedented turmoil in Zambia in recent years.

In April 2005, 51 Zambian workers were killed in an explosion in a factory linked with the Chambishi copper mine. The Chinese company tried to address the situation through compensations to the victims' families, but the event created an uproar, and Chinese working practices were widely criticized in Zambia. In the following year, protests against Chinese companies grew and turned into riots. These culminated in violence in which one Zambian worker was shot to death. This had an impact on the 2006 presidential elections of Zambia: the main opposition candidate Michael Sata ran an anti-Chinese campaign and promised to rid the country of Chinese "infesters" (meaning Chinese corporations) if elected. (Brautigam 2009, 5-7; Mutesa 2010.) Although he lost the elections in 2006, he was elected as president in 2011. His campaign promises in 2011 fell short of the fierce rhetoric of the 2006 campaign, but he still campaigned for stricter regulation on mining and foreign labour. This does not seem to have changed the countries' relations dramatically (Brautigam 2011b). As President, Sata has been relatively understanding of Chinese interests in Zambia (in fact, his first official audience as President was with the Chinese ambassador), and he has tried to attract even more investments to the country. Although the true impact of Sata's election remains to be seen, there has not yet been a marked change in labour relations or restrictions on Chinese companies in Zambia, while labour unrest has continued among mining communities.

This shows how the question of the Chinese rise in Africa is a major issue on the continent, and it has potential to affect local politics. In Zambia, precarious labour rights and the limitedness of the "China-effect" on local living standards have disappointed much of the population. These broken expectations have led to protest and borderline xenophobic sensations. Simultaneously, there is a discrepancy between political rhetoric and action, which seems to mirror the overall disagreement on the Chinese impact on Zambia and the continent more generally.

Bélinga iron ore project, Gabon

Ivindo natural park in Gabon is the home for many wildlife species, and it also includes the famous Kongou falls. In addition, the Bélinga area, which is located in the park, has large amounts of iron ore, which have gone untapped until now. This seemed set to change in 2006 when the Chinese group CMEC signed a deal with the Gabonese government, acquiring a license to establish a mine in the area, according to Banktrack (2011). Along with the mine, CMEC had the permission to build a dam in the Kongou falls to produce electricity for the mining as well as roads through the jungle in order to transport the ore for shipment to China.

China Exim Bank was to fund the whole multi-billion dollar project, and all the ore was going to be shipped to China. The Gabonese hoped that the cooperation with China would help the country's economy, which now relies heavily on oil (Stella, 2007; CIA, 2012). However, a contract leaked by Gabonese civil society organization Brainforest revealed that only 10 % of the profits would stay in Gabon, and the rest would have flowed to China. CMEC had even been granted 25 years' exemption from tax (Banktrack 2011). Civil society organizations have claimed that the deal involved corruption.

The social effects of the project were also called into question. CMEC had promised that the project would have created 30,000 jobs. However, Gabonese environmentalists feared that many of these would go to workers brought in from China.

Above all, however, Brainforest and other Gabonese civil society actors have been critical of the project's impact on the environment. They feared that the construction work would threaten Ivindo's wildlife. In addition, the dam would have inundated over 5,000 square kilometers, which would have forced local communities to resettle and threatened many conservation areas nearby. The activists pointed out that the Kongou falls were far from ideal for the location of the dam, and suggested that CMEC should build the dam at the Tsengué-Lélédi falls instead. They were recommended as a dam building site in a 1960s study. Brainforest have pointed out that no such assessment has been carried out on the dam to the Kongou falls, even though this is required by Gabonese law.

Despite the lack of environmental clearance, CMEC was allowed to start work in Bélinga. However, due to pressure from Brainforest and Environnement Gabon, the government renegotiated its contract with the Chinese in 2008. Furthermore, activists notified China Exim Bank that the project violates its own environmental policies. China Exim Bank ultimately withdrew its funding in late 2008. After a hiatus of several years, Gabonese authorities abandoned their deal with CMEC in 2012. Although they were reportedly talking with the Australian mining giant BHP Billiton, the future of the project is now unclear. (Reuters, 2012.)

The Bélinga iron ore project is an example of at least partially successful civil society intervention into emerging actors' business practices. The key person behind the movement against CMEC's activities has been Brainforest's founder and president, Marc Ona Essangui. Ona Essangui, who is wheelchair-bound, forced the government to the renegotiations that contributed to the dismantling of the original contract. The case demonstrates that one African CSO can make a difference through concerted lobbying efforts. However, it also highlights the difficulties that African civil society actors face when they confront emerging actors and their government allies. Marc Ona Essangui himself has been arrested several times, and he has previously been barred from leaving Gabon (McCarthy, 2012). In 2009 Ona Essangui was awarded the Goldman Prize, the 'Nobel for the environment' for his efforts to protect the Ivindo natural park (Block, 2009; Mistiaen, 2009).

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Agricultural cooperation

Agriculture is a fundamental sector in Africa's development, since a substantial proportion of Africans depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Emerging actors' agricultural activities in Africa can be seen as agricultural investments/aid and land acquisitions. Although it has been noted that Brazil has been active in the sector, there is remarkably little research or other coverage on the subject. Therefore, this section will be based on China's and India's engagements. Both China and India have shown a keen interest in the agricultural sector of Africa, although their current engagements in the sector are rather modest. Their primary interests are food security and the pursuit of business opportunities driven by the current upsurge in foodstuff prices. Both India and China have engaged in the development of African agricultural sectors through technical aid and they have provided African countries with agricultural equipment and other technology aimed at improving African yield productivity. (Brautigam 2009; Modi 2010.)

This has the potential of producing positive outcomes since African yields have often been symptomatically low, and since Chinese and Indian technology is better suited to African conditions than western technology. However, these kinds of aid ventures or investments must also be treated with serious caution, since they almost exclusively foster commercial production of agricultural products. Thus, questions of the division of benefits and rights of ownership reveal to be key for understanding the true impacts of these processes. In addition, it is often hard to distinguish between investment projects and straightforward land grabbing, which highlights the need for critical engagement.

Land acquisitions or land grabs have been widely criticized in development. They have been identified as leading to detrimental developmental impacts, such as the marginalization of the rural poor and particularly rural women, the crumbling of customary rights to water and land, and increasing vulnerability. The phenomenon has become increasingly visible in the past decade because of global developments, and although not the primary drivers of land grabbing,

the emerging actors have received their part of the criticism for it. (Anseew et al. 2012.) However, it has been claimed that their role is often exaggerated (Brautigam 2009) and that the emerging actors *themselves* are experiencing land grabbing by foreign companies in their own rural areas, which adds on the pressure for additional areas for cultivation. Although growing players on the global arena, China, India and Brazil still have considerable poor populations and their food security is an understandable goal for their governments, even though it does not work as justification for their more questionable actions in Africa.

It is crucial to make the impacts of land grabbing by emerging actors visible and even act upon them. However, the broader global linkages of the situation and the impact of multinational corporations in these countries as well as in Africa must be understood simultaneously.

Indian Karuturi in Gambella, Ethiopia

One of the most remarkable land deals in Africa has been the one signed between Ethiopia and Indian agri-giant Karuturi Global in 2011. The deal involves the lease of 100,000 hectares of farmland (with the option for 200,000 hectares more), for the nominal sum of 250 US dollars per week. The price can be explained by the location of the land: it is in Gambella, a remote area by the volatile Sudanese border. (Vidal 2011.)

The deal coincides with the Ethiopian government's "villagisation" scheme, in which 15,000 people are moved to less remote areas in Gambella. Even though both officials and Karuturi deny a connection between the projects, a report by Human Rights Watch claimed that the locals are being moved to make way for Karuturi. In addition, conditions in the new villages are often poor, the residents face intimidation by security forces, and there are even reports of violence against the local population, including 20 rapes in 2011 alone. (Human Rights Watch 2012.)

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The precarious role of civil society: possibilities for change

The role of civil society is addressed only seldom in the literature, which mirrors the fact that Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are not in general seen as significant actors in Sino-African cooperation. It has been even stated that they are “the most evident losers in the process of China’s expanding Africa role” (de Oliveira 2008, 120). This chapter provides a brief overview of the ways in which CSOs can try to influence Sino-African relations.

A starting point for thinking about Sino-African cooperation is to evaluate how the Chinese government deals with CSOs within its own territory. Historically, the government’s response to the small and slowly emerging Chinese civil society has been one of shifting positions, but generally the civil society has been allowed to expand gradually for the past 20 years. Nevertheless, China is still an authoritarian state, and there is a remarkable disparity within its civil society: service-providing organisations that complement governmental efforts have a relatively free environment⁶, but advocacy organisations are still handled extremely strictly. (Howell 2012.)

It has also been claimed that Chinese CSOs experience in engaging in foreign policy issues is close to none (Tao 2008). However, Anabela Lemos and Daniel Ribeiro from Mozambican organisation *Justiça Ambiental* (JA) make the point that in spite of limited resources and tight political control of Chinese civil society and language difficulties, African and Chinese civil society intend to work together and that JA has an active and well-working relationship with its Chinese partners, who have especially on environmental issues been able to significantly support civil society struggles in Mozambique. Furthermore, Chinese people are acknowledging China’s actions abroad due to severe restrictions on logging of the already limited Chinese forests. Why is it

acceptable to cut elsewhere if it is not acceptable in China?⁷

China’s actions are considerably more exposed to public scrutiny in Africa, and the reputational risks are far greater (Bosshard 2008). Therefore, it is reasonable to suspect that Beijing’s response to CSOs in Africa would be more conciliatory than within China. However, neither public nor private Chinese actors in Africa have any considerable experience of dealing with CSOs and it is unlikely that Chinese authorities would listen to voices from the civil society (Howell 2012, 57). However, Lemos underlines that it is crucial to search for functional ways to influence Chinese activities. When a political approach is not possible, a technical one may work. Mphanda Nkuwa Dam Project in Mozambique is an example of a case in which China’s authorities have at least listened to international civil society arguments coordinated by Friends of the Earth International, although the exact reasons behind China’s decreased interest on this project are not publicly known. Unfortunately, Brazil has become the main catalyst in driving this socially, ecologically and economically destructive project forward. Lemos goes on to say that in Mozambique, Brazil has actually had a far more negative impact than China but that the world is more judgmental of China than of other emerging actors. It is also important to notice that African and western governments are often as difficult as the Chinese one to influence.

Besides Sino-African civil society cooperation in certain African countries, there is also some exchange of ideas in international events such as the World Social Forum (Bello 2007) and Asia Europe People’s Forum. There are clear shared interests between CSOs as the problems that persist in different corners of the world are very similar in nature. Ideally, such “coalitions of interest” could act as mediators and watch-dogs between the governmental actors in play. It would be critical to separate the entangled economic and political models highlighted (Lönnqvist 2008).

Another possibility for CSOs is to try to influence the Chinese processes in Africa through Western agencies. Although Beijing wishes to portray itself as an alternative distinct from the Western hemisphere, China and western powers are closely interlinked. Many western agencies, such as regulatory bodies or large investors have

⁷ Anabela Lemos from *Justiça Ambiental* was interviewed by Outi Hakkarainen (Keva Helsinki) in Helsinki, on 8 October 2012, and the reflections presented by Daniel Ribeiro were sent by e-mail on 19 October 2012.

⁶ It has even been documented that some of these Chinese CSOs have extended their activities to Africa.

considerable influence on Chinese companies (de Oliveira 2008, 102). The highly visible “Genocide Olympics” campaign is a successful example of such advocacy, but there are also clear caveats in such a strategy. While the divide in western-Chinese rhetoric concerning African development is entrenched in differing views of liberal democracy and economic liberalism, it might not be productive for CSOs to clearly align with either end of the spectrum.

It is also important to acknowledge that in various contexts trade unions have been crucial in challenging unfair employment practices used by Chinese firms. They are also well positioned to exert an influence on Chinese corporate behaviour in other ways, in cooperation with other areas of civil society, such as those working on employment and trading rights. Furthermore, in spite of remarkable problems, trade unions have managed to organise the workers of Chinese companies. For example, trade unions have presented reclamations to the Chinese embassy in Ghana and the Ghanaian National Labour Commission and have tried to negotiate with their Nigerian peers in order to develop a common approach to the challenges created by Chinese companies. (SASK 2009a.) The western trade unions and other civil society actors could give notable support for African trade unions in their struggle for decent working conditions in the companies owned or financed by the emerging actors.

Whatever the CSOs’ strategy of engaging with China and the emerging actors might be, it seems clear that, in order to continue successful work in Africa, CSOs must take the rise of these actors into account in their operations. The collective aim would be to gradually build up a national and international constituency to follow their activities in Africa.

Sino-Mozambican civil society cooperation

Civil society in general vocally strives for social and environmental justice, and tries to make its presence felt and heard. However, in some parts of the world being discreet is the norm. Civil society in China has managed to gain ground in a difficult political environment and with very little international recognition as it would hinder their progress instead of helping. In a country where international support can be seen as interference, and raising public awareness is often regarded as destabilising the country, one has to respect the ability of Chinese civil society to still link up with international struggles so effectively.

In Mozambique, China’s presence in the illegal logging and fishing (especially shark finning) has had devastating impacts. However, when Mozambican civil society linked up with Chinese civil society, the interaction was very positive. In China, academics have more space to raise difficult issues, as long as they have data to support them, and there is strong synergy between civil society and academia. Digital spaces like blogs are thriving with vibrant debate and personal links and acquaintances are used effectively to get information to people with influence in safe ways.

Since our first interaction with Chinese civil society, we have received support for our illegal logging campaign and shark finning campaign, and we are still finding new ways to work together. However, the space for civil society in China is now starting to close down again, with government restrictions on the increase. Similarly, in Mozambique, the space for civil society is shrinking.

DANIEL RIBEIRO

JUSTIÇA AMBIENTAL, MOZAMBIQUE

Unkept promises and people's successful action: Brazilian Vale in Mozambique

Brazilian based company Vale Mozambique started to operate in Mozambique in 2004. That year it won an international bid to explore the vast coal reserves in Moatize district in the western province of Tete. The Moatize coal mine is one of the world's biggest, and it is set to produce 11 million tons per year in the next 35 years, the life span of the concession, in an area of 23 780 hectares. The coal will be exported to Europe, Asia and the Middle East but used also for internal demands such as the planned construction of a thermal central enclosed in the project. According to the government, the project brings prosperity, fights against poverty and unemployment, and promotes development in the region as well as in the entire country.

According to environmentalist organization Justiça Ambiental (JA, 2010), the agreements between Vale and the Mozambican government are secret. One of the constant battles between civil society and the government is the disclosure of the agreements of all megaprojects, but these deals have remained secret documents in Mozambique. Local authorities in the Moatize district also claim to know nothing about the agreement and raise doubts on the whole process of Vale winning the bid.

Vale started to invest in the area in 2007 and two years later it initiated the "resettlement package" of the 1313 families, almost 7 000 people, living in the area of the concession. A report by Centro de Integridade Publica (CIP) indicates that the people were divided into two groups, "rural" and "semi rural". The 717 rurals were moved to a new farmland in Cateme almost 40 km from the central town of Moatize, and the other group was resettled closer to the city center. Still another group refused both solutions and demanded monetary compensations.

In 2010 people started to complain that they had been swindled by Vale. The company resettled the people to broken houses instead of the pleasant-looking model houses shown to them in the beginning. Furthermore, the resettled complained that they had been promised water and energy, which had not been supplied. They had been promised two hectares of arable farmland but were instead given one hectare of non-arable land. Famine is now widespread in the resettlement region. The "rurals" are now so far from the capital city that they cannot market their products. Vale is also accused of refusing to respond to family changes since the process started in 2009. They have refused to give houses to orphans whose parents died after 2009 or to new couples married after 2009 but before the actual move.

The situation prompted a response from the resettled people who demanded, through their representatives, that Vale must address all their complaints and demands. These community representatives had large support from local CSOs such as Justiça Ambiental (JA), Centro de Integridade Publica (CIP), Liga Moçambicana dos Direitos Humanos (LDH) and União Nacional de Camponeses (UNAC). In addition, the independent press has had a huge role in making noise about the situation of the people of Moatize. However, the complaints of the people and CSOs were answered by arrogance and silence by both government authorities and Vale.

As there was no light in sight for the solution of the complaints made by the resettled in the first half of December 2011, the population of Cateme sent a document to the district government, to Vale and to the district committee of the ruling Frelimo Party, requesting speedy intervention to solve the problems faced by the resettled communities. Cateme residents wanted urgent measures taken by 10 January 2012 at the latest.

As nothing happened, about 500 of those resettled in Cateme blocked the road and railway to Moatize on the very same day of 10 January. For about 24 hours, no trains could move on the line from Moatize to the port of Beira. The riot police FIR came to disperse the crowd. It was a violent crackdown in which people were detained, beaten and hunted down in a house-to-house search for "agitators". Justiça Ambiental (2012) has argued that the riot police is logistically supported by Vale, which also pays for some government expenses, including official trips of the governor of Tete.

CIP, JA, UNAC, LDH and the new Plataforma dos Recursos Naturais criticized the move through open letters, press releases and other mechanisms, denouncing the brutal repression of the legitimate grievances of the resettled and demanded that instead of repressing people the government should negotiate with Vale to solve the concerns of the resettled. According to them, the government must secure the social and economic development of the resettled and their well-being should be "above all maximization of profit by multinationals and their local allies".

CIP demanded that the government establish strategies and policies to regulate resettlement and draft a clear policy on corporate responsibility and ensure its implementation by all companies. The government should increase its capacity of monitoring the impacts of mining and secure the well-being of Mozambicans, in particular of the communities in the concession areas.

Initially, the government was critical of the protests and backed the police repression. This includes the governor himself, who was quoted as saying during a tense meeting with protesters that "the government has the right to do whatever necessary to ensure peace and development", which people saw as a direct threat to them. However, on 23 January, the governor suddenly admitted that the demonstrators' claims were valid and legitimate. He said the houses were shoddily built and needed repairs and that water and agricultural support had not been provided as part of the resettlement package. On 18 January 2012, Vale admitted the wrong doings and promised to solve the problems within six months. Justiça Ambiental (2010) has suggested that there are also many other points of contention between the community and Vale such as restraining freedom of circulation, insulting the cultural heritage of the region by destroying cemeteries, labor abuses and refusing to hire local workers as was promised. JA continues to follow the case.

On 27 January 2012, Vale won the annual Public Eye award for the worst corporate misconduct from activists and CSOs at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, for "repeated human rights abuses, inhumane working conditions and the ruthless exploitation of nature". The announcement was made by Nobel prize winner Joseph Stiglitz. That prize should also be given to the Mozambican government as the "worst government misconduct" for failing to protect its own people!

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China and other emerging actors in Africa

The rise of Chinese activities in Africa has undoubtedly been one of the defining developments on the continent in the 21st century. It has the possibility of opening new opportunities for Africans, but it can also be seen as posing significant threats for Africa's sustained development.

In order to understand contemporary African processes, it is crucial to understand the various forms of this Sino-African relationship. This report presents the history, objectives and multiple implications of China's activities in Africa and as such provides a starting point for understanding these complex phenomena.

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